(b) if so, the details thereof and Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI SATYABRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) and (b) As per provisional data provided by the DGCI&S, Kolkata, exports grew by 9.99% in dollar terms during April-September, 2003-04. This is over and above the growth rate of 18.81% during April-September, 2002-03 and despite the Iraq War, SARS and slowdown in major markets like US. Exports Promotion being a constant endeavour of the Government, export performance is monitored on a regular basis. A number of programmes/schemes have been launched through the Union Budget, 2003-04 and Exim Policy, 2003-04. In the Exim Policy, 2003-04, besides, the focus on Service exports, policies have been devised to strengthen Special Economic Zones (SEZs), 100% Export Oriented Units (EOU's), etc. A new programme called "Focus CIS" has been introduced. Duty Neutralization Schemes for import of inputs used for export production have been strengthened.

Export of tea to Pakistan

1237. SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether a Pakistani tea delegation visited India in September, 2003 and had discussions with Government;

(b) whether Government hava agreed to consider an incentive linked package for tea exports to Pakistan;

(c) whether all the concessions as recommended by the Pakistan Government have been fully met;

(d) if so, whether India has exported 10 million kg. of tea to Pakistan during the current fiscal year;

(e) if so, the other steps being taken to export more tea to Pakistan and

(f) to what extent it has been welcomed by the Pakistan Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI CHENNAMANENI VIDYASAGAR RAO): (a) A Pakistani delegation under the aegis of the Pakistan Tea Association visited India in September 2003 and held discussions mainly with the tea trade members in South India.

(b) Exporters of tea from India to Pakistan would be eligible for all benefits and financial assistance under the various schemes of the Tea Board to promote exports to Indian tea.

(c) The Pakistan tea trade delegation, which visited India, has not sought any concessions from the Government of India.

(d) and (e) During 2003-04 (April-October), India has exported 3.25 million kgs of tea of Pakistan as against 1.98 million kgs exported during the corresponding period in 2002-03. However, there has been greater interaction between the tea industry of India and Pakistan and the Indian Tea Association has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Pakistan Tea Association providing for import of 10 million kgs of tea by Pakistan from India, during July 2003 to June 2004.

(f) Government is not aware of any reaction from the Government of Pakistan with respect to the recent interaction between the tea industry of both countries.

Trade relations with China

1238. PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA :
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether trade agreement with China signed during the Prime Minister's visit have improved the trade relations with China;

(b) if so, whether India and China have decided to establish joint study group on economic cooperation;

(c) whether the Confederation of Indian Industry has entered into a fresh Memorandum of Understanding with the All India-China Federation of Industry and Commerce in October, 2003;